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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: UNAMID DEPLOYMENT: SOME PROGRESS BUT WELL BEHIND SCHEDULE

REFERENCE: (A) KHARTOUM 0085

(B) 07 KHARTOUM 2058

(C) 07 KHARTOUM 2048

(D) 07 KHARTOUM 1866

(E) 07 KHARTOUM 1735

¶1. (SBU) Egyptian political officer Tamer Azzam told poloff January 24 that Egyptian troops for three separate UNAMID deployments are poised to arrive in February and should complete their deployment by the end of April. Azzam said that the Egyptian contingent's equipment had arrived at Port Sudan and is in the process of being transported to Darfur. (Note: UNAMID could not confirm the arrival of this equipment, noting they have limited ability to track items at the port. End note.) Azzam said a 150-person Egyptian signals company will be assigned to El-Fasher, a 275-person engineering company will be assigned to El-Geneina, and a 200-person troop transport unit will be assigned to Nyala.

¶2. (SBU) According to a January 17 UN Headquarters Department of Field Support document shared with FieldOff January 24, the UN has planned precise dates for deployment of these units. The signals company and the engineering company are expected in El Fasher and El Geneina respectively by March 10, with equipment to be delivered between March 3 and 7. The transport company is expected in Nyala by February 29, with equipment scheduled to arrive between February 25 and 28.

¶3. (SBU) Azzam said that Cairo and UN/DPKO are discussing the deployment of an Egyptian mechanized infantry battalion to be deployed in Nyala. If approved, the 850 soldiers will likely be deployed in the Northern Sector. UNAMID's Chief of Transition Plans told FieldOff that DPKO wanted UNAMID to accept this battalion and an Ethiopian battalion as part of an "Early Effects Package." UNAMID has not yet formally replied to DPKO's proposal, but it has already indicated informally that such an early deployment will be difficult. Force Commander Agwai himself reportedly considers that UNAMID is not yet logistically prepared to receive these forces; a deployment location has not even been identified for the Egyptians, for example. UNAMID views the push to deploy these forces as DPKO's "political response" to the Government of Sudan's refusal to admit non-African forces who were slated to do a similar job (the Thais), and the FC has reportedly said that he will not let such politics dictate the proper deployment of troops for UNAMID.

¶4. (SBU) There is also considerable internal UN debate on how to move the Egyptian mechanized battalion into Darfur. Reportedly there is a \$2.6 million cost difference between deploying the full battalion (people and cargo) by air versus by sea. It is likely that DPKO will settle on a combination of air and sea transport, with the 260-person advance company slated for airlift to Nyala between March 10 and 14, and equipment expected to arrive between February 24 and March 10. Cargo for the bulk of the battalion will be shipped by sea and should arrive in Nyala o/a March 31.

¶5. (SBU) Pakistani Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Saleem Mohammed Khan told poloff January 22 that the Pakistani engineering company originally scheduled for a December deployment has been delayed. UNAMID sources told FieldOff January 24 that this company should arrive in March, although UNAMID has not yet received a load list for the unit. The Pakistani DCM added that the Level III Medical Hospital (staffed by Pakistan) that is planned for Nyala has also been delayed. UNAMID told FieldOff on January 24 that the hospital unit is also expected to deploy in March.

¶6. (SBU) Nigerian DCM Muktar Kano told poloff January 22 that a date has not been set for the arrival of the Nigerian Level II Hospital planned for El-Geneina, which was originally planned to deploy in December. He opined that the earliest the hospital unit would deploy would be mid-February. A January 17 UN document shared with FieldOff on January 24 indicates that the UN plans for the advance party of the Nigerian hospital unit to arrive in El Geneina o/a March 20, while the rest of the 100-person unit should deploy by the end of March.

¶7. (SBU) Comment: Given that the bulk of the Chinese engineering company's equipment arrived on November 10 (ref B) and the Chinese only started construction on January 21 (ref A), post views the Egyptian deployment plan as fairly realistic. However, given that the Chinese advance party arrived on November 24 (ref E) and the main body has yet to arrive, post suspects that Egypt's anticipated deployment of its 275 engineers in late April is overly optimistic. This suggests that the construction of camps by the Egyptian engineering company for other UNAMID forces will be delayed. As a result, UNAMID will be hard-pressed to reach its stated goal of achieving fifty percent deployment by July 1, 2008.

FERNANDEZ